

The natural Art. Artists of diferent species

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Primate societies

Edgar Morin (1975) stated that “Society is one of the most widely spread fundamental forms, developed in a very unequal but very varied way. “It is concluded that neither communication, nor the symbol, nor the rite, are human exclusives. And that they have very remote roots in the evolution of species.” Since Karl von Frisch discovered in the 1920s that bees use the dance movement to communicate the spatial locations of resources among honeycomb companions, symbolic language has ceased to be an exclusive advance of humans (A. Gentile. 2021).

Morin explained that we cannot consider human beings and anthropology as separate phenomena from biology, on the contrary we are the result of this. The apparent disorder of animal societies of apes is usually a complex and intricate web of hierarchies, internal differentiation, intercommunications, rules, norms, prohibitions, organizations, which contribute to the success of the whole and the individual, just like human societies.

Human societies, moreover, derive from this paleo social evolution of primates and later from hominids. In these exist hierarchical divisions, but also differences in status, role, activities, which indicates an embryo of social stratification. The dominant males protect the territory, direct the fight against predators, guide the group, maintain the hierarchical structure. Females are maternal care givers and socializers of the younger ones. Many of the paleo cultural explorations and advances are due to young members, says the author. “Young members play, explore, are attracted by novelty. By assimilating the knowledge and know-how

of adults, they can introduce modifications, improvements, innovations. It was probably they who, playing with flint and the sounds, lit the fire and invented the word.”

If it is true that the dominant are regularly replaced in competition by competitors. Subordinates accept their luck in submission and complacency, often exposing the back to the dominant male as a female, expressing sexual devotion and servitude. This can be considered, according to Morin, a “symbolic behavior”.

Often females and males of medium status offer themselves to care for the cubs of others of higher status. This behavior is often associated both with the pleasure of serving an individual of higher status, and an ambition to raise socially a small step. This according to Morin indicates not only the notion of class, but also the notion of social echelon. Not only social inequality but an objective of social mobility.

Morin notes that “power confers all the advantages, all freedoms and personal free expansion.” On the contrary, subordination is accompanied by restrictions, frustrations, prohibitions, inhibitions “and perhaps even neuroses”. Thus “social inequality is the inequality of happiness”.

In baboons, Reso monkeys and chimpanzee’s societies, groups with a single male are the outline rudiment of a family. In the groups of many males the formation of the family is atrophied. There is a strong bond between mother and child, between male and female, but there is no parent-child family nucleus. On the contrary, around the mother/child relationship there are deeper and more durable ties. More durable than in general mammals and inferior primates. Thus, there is development of a pre-family nucleus around the mother. So this image, of the mother, is not only an extremely powerful archetype in humans. We previously have also seen (Cabeça, 2021a) how this image, of the life-generating female – Venus – could be important in the birth of the first artistic figurative antropomorphic manifestations.

Art as expression

Analyzing the art in clay we saw that the psychologist João Luis Bucho (2011) refers precisely to this characteristic of the material and our relationship with it. He states that through clay, matter and creator establish a *Zone of Near Development*, according to Vygotsky (1987), which stimulates functions such as perception, attention, cognition, sensation and stimulation of the symbolic and imaginary. Clay acts as the “transitional object” between the world of fantasy and reality. “The expressions in clay...represent the manifestation of thoughts, feelings, conflicts, anxieties, questions (...) and establish the dialogue between the conscious and the unconscious.” Transposition, which often occurs unconsciously, to the molded object of interior images allows us, even rudimentarily, to dominate emotions, sensations, traumas

or anxieties. Thus appeasing, with a therapeutic effect also, the human mind. Therefore art could be considered expression and expression is a necessity not a choice. This could explain the need for humans to elaborate so many images of animals and women (Paleolithic Venus). This could be their subconscious expression for their need for survival (animals) and continuity (women).

Morin states “A society self-produces itself non-stop because it self-destructs non-stop.” This is a natural dynamic that contributes to permanent efficiency. These evolutionary bumps, says the author, occur naturally and brain development does not originate them, but occurs dynamically with them. That is: it is not the brain that grows, reasons, and makes things happen, it is rather the phenomena (or embryo of phenomena) that occur and drive brain to growth. In turn, larger brain also potency more complex phenomena, and so on...

Therefore, we have many human behaviors including social, family behavior, predation, manufacture and handling of objects, hierarchical order, seizure of the environment, control of fire, and others apparently coming from our primate or hominid state. This seems to indicate the emergence and evolution of these behaviors and phenomena as natural and biological.

Art in *Homo sapiens*/*Homo neanderthal*/ *Homo erectus* species

Currently the discussion (White 2019) takes place about the artistic symbolic behavior in the Homo Neanderthal species and beyond it. There are examples of cave art, with red dots, circles, hand stencils. New forms of dating these give us less and less doubt that some artistic representations (Hoffmann, 2021) of cave art may originate not in Homo Sapiens, but prior to his existence. At over 50, 70 and 100,000 years old. Some traces of similar symbolic behavior could even go beyond two and half million years (Harrod, James. 2014), hence originated by Homo habilis/Homo rudolfensis or a very early Homo erectus. If we consider these as different species of hominids, even if for some they were considered human subspecies (Bednarik, R. 2020), we can say that we would always be in the presence of artistic manifestations in beings of marked evolutionary and cognitive difference. This would make art an existing phenomenon in diverse species.

Let us remember that the symbolic representation exists in apes. Representation in artistic language, would require in addition to a brain capable of the task, the ability to transform and handle objects and raw materials. For if the understanding of the symbolic already exists and is used in other species, this could take place in any context that occurred, naturally.

Animal creativity

We have seen (Cabeça, P.T. (2021, b)) that Animals also demonstrate creativity. Kaufman et al. (2011) establish as the premise of their work around the neurobiology of animal creativity, the definition of creativity according to humans from Plucker & Beghetto, (2004): *Creativity is the interaction among aptitude, process, and environment by which an individual or group produces a perceptible product that is both novel and useful as defined within a social context.* In the same text and referring to animals, they ensure that “the whole theory of creativity in humans is applied point by point to animal creativity (...) eliminating the parts that do not apply.” These observations reinforce that creativity can be a biological phenomenon transversal to many species. A bio tool that ensures best probability of survival with fewer and more optimized resources.

The way creativity seems to arise, usually spontaneous and without us consciously causing it is described by Andreasen N.C. (2011). This process is also described in some literature (Gleitman, Fridlung & Reisberg, 2014a) as *unconscious incubation*. The subconscious way the phenomenon occurs suggests that there will be biological mechanism to lead the process. Sanders (2015) describes the cerebellum, which receives stimuli from the environment and reacts accordingly, being the original and primordial processing organ of the primate that gave rise to us. Cerebellum commands the instinct reactions of the body in the environment that surrounds us. Saggat et al. (2015) conduct an experience at Stanford University where a sample of 30 participants, invited to draw verbs (levitate, exhale, whisper), were subjected to brain scans. The conclusion was: the more creative the drawing was, the greater the activity in the cerebellum. So creativity apparently is formed, neurology tells us, from images of the subconscious, therefore coming from the cerebellum (Cabeça, P.T. 2021b). The beginning of art in diverse hominid species may simply be an attempt to materialize some of these images. Nothing more than this. Less is always more.

Is Art inevitable?

If art has arisen in another species, such as Homo Neanderthalensis, or Homo habilis/rudolfensis or a very early Homo erectus, this may show us that art has the potential to emerge naturally in any species that, sooner or later, have the rudiments of processing and using raw materials and utensils. Are we looking in the wrong order? Trying to find the beginning of art in rationality and complexification of symbolic language? Or is it a phenomenon, like so many others, spontaneous simple, biological, and natural?...

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